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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 010390

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TAGS: [KJUS](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: AUC LEADERS SEEK DEAL ON EXTRADITION

REF: BOGOTA 9089

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood, Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) Peace Commissioner Restrepo, para-friendly Senator Moreno de Caro, OAS Verification Chief Caramagna and National Commission on Reparations and Reconciliation member Jaime Jaramillo have all passed messages to the Ambassador suggesting that paramilitary leaders want to cut deals on extradition. The messages suggest reduced sentences in return for alleged full disclosure of their narcotrafficking, and in some cases they propose serving reduced sentences in Europe if the U.S. will not agree. In all cases, the Ambassador made clear that no deal was possible with fugitives. End Summary.

RESTREPO: AUC LEADERS' INTEREST IN EXTRADITION DEAL

¶2. (C) Peace Commissioner Restrepo on September 22 (reftel) told the Ambassador that AUC leaders, in particular Salvatore Mancuso, want to speak to the USG regarding options on extradition and serving some limited jail time in the United States in exchange for information on the AUC's structure and operations, drug routes, and corrupt GOC officials. Restrepo emphasized that his message should not be interpreted as reflecting a weakening in the GOC's commitment to extradition. However, it came at a time when the paramilitaries had suspended demobilizations, with 8,000 more to go.

SENATOR MORENO DE CARO FOLLOWS SUIT

¶3. (C) Senator Carlos Moreno de Caro, a regular paramilitary interlocutor, met the Ambassador on October 10 to deliver a similar message. Like Restrepo, he stressed the difficult situation of Mancuso. Moreno stated that AUC leaders are very concerned with extradition, a concern that only heightened following "Don Berna's" transfer to Combita high security prison, which many paramilitary leaders are

convinced is the waiting room for extradition to the U.S. Moreno de Caro met with the Spanish Embassy, in an unsuccessful attempt to try to broker a transfer of Mancuso, and perhaps others, for reduced jail time there.

CARAMAGNA UNCOMFORTABLE IN DELIVERING SIMILAR MESSAGE

¶4. (C) OAS Verification Mission Director Sergio Caramagna met with the Ambassador October 11 to deliver the same message, but admitted he was not comfortable doing so. He said he had heard in various settings from Mancuso and other AUC leaders' of their interest in negotiating a deal with the USG. Caramagna was taken aback, in particular, with Mancuso's change of demeanor over the last year, and especially in recent weeks. He described Mancuso as "powerless and disoriented, a destroyed man." He noted that Mancuso and some of the other leaders were now prepared to spend time in jail under the terms of the Justice and Peace law, which was not the case when they began negotiating with the GOC a year ago. They are "panicked" by the prospect of extradition to the U.S. In Mancuso's view, said Caramagna, extradition could become the obstacle to the successful conclusion of the demobilization process. He said he was informing the U.S. on this matter because of his concern about demobilizations getting back on track as soon as possible.

¶5. (C) Caramagna also confirmed that Restrepo has affirmed in clear terms to AUC leaders that they could fully comply with the J&P law and still be extradited for their crimes before becoming paramilitaries.

CNRR MEMBER DELIVERS MESSAGE FROM MANCUSO

¶6. (C) National Commission for Reparations and Reconciliation member Jaime Jaramillo delivered a similar message from Mancuso to deputy political counselor on November 2. According to Jaramillo, Mancuso is willing to serve his sentence under the Justice and Peace law in the U.S. He does not want to be treated "like the Shining Path, in a cage or a cave." Mancuso told Jaramillo that he would be safer in the U.S. and believes that other AUC beneficiaries of the Justice and Peace law would be interested in U.S. jail time as well. Jaramillo said Mancuso is aware that he could face additional U.S. charges but he was looking for a plea bargain. D/polcouns reiterated that no deal was possible with fugitives from U.S. justice.

AUC PETITION TO SERVE SENTENCES ABROAD

¶7. (C) In the last few weeks, AUC spokespersons have stated that after being convicted in Colombia, they would like to serve their time outside of the country, possibly in Europe. AUC leaders, especially, see no opportunities for them in Colombia and claim their lives would be in danger from fellow AUC and FARC members.

WOOD